

again. The University of Minnesota Golden Gopher women's ice hockey team defeated Harvard 6-2 to win the NCAA women's ice hockey championship. This marks the first NCAA championship for any women's sport at the University of Minnesota and was a true Minnesota effort as 12 of the 20 women on the roster are Minnesotans.

Winning the national championship was the crown jewel on an already spectacular season. The Golden Gophers defeated Dartmouth in the national semifinal 5-1 and former national champions the University of Minnesota-Duluth for the Western Collegiate Hockey Association championship. The Golden Gophers' final record for 2003-2004 was a stunning 30 wins, 4 losses and 2 ties.

The Gophers' championship season also yielded a number of individual honors. Coach Laura Halldorson was named the American Hockey Coaches Association's Division I Women's Coach of the Year. Sophomore Krissy Wendell was named tournament MVP. Five Golden Gophers were named to the NCAA all-tournament team: Krissy Wendell, Natalie Darwitz, Allie Sanchez, Jody Horak, and Kelly Stephens. This represents the most national all-tournament honors awarded to any Golden Gophers team in history.

Mr. Speaker, Minnesota is, and will always remain, the State of Hockey. I congratulate the players, coaches, staff, and fans for this wonderful achievement. And with most of the team back next year, we hope to be back here celebrating again.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to be here to support House Resolution 630, congratulating the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers women's hockey team for their NCAA 2003-2004 women's ice hockey championship. I also want to congratulate head coach Laura Halldorson on being named the American Hockey Coaches Association's Coach of the Year for the third time since 1998.

This women's hockey team is the first women's team at the University of Minnesota to win an NCAA championship. We are all proud of the extraordinary accomplishment of all of these women. The success this team has achieved this year will help to continue to fuel women's hockey, which is exploding in Minnesota and across the country.

The success of the Golden Gophers and the ever-growing opportunities for women in sports remind us of the importance of title IX, the landmark legislation that banned sex discrimination in schools. Since its passage over 30 years ago, title IX has kicked open the door for women and girls in athletics and education; and since the passage of title IX, girls and women have gone from hoping for a team to hoping to make the team, from ringette to ice hockey.

Unfortunately, there are still some who would like to turn back the clock and see this law weakened. But as women continue to make strides toward equal opportunity, title IX must continue to remain strong. We must uphold the progress we have made, and we need to continue to expand the opportunities for our daughters, our granddaughters, our nieces, and for the next generation of young girls. Every girl and young woman must be given a chance one day to become a national champion, just as these Golden Gophers women had the chance.

Once again, I congratulate the University of Minnesota Lady Gophers on their extraordinary year.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to again thank my colleagues for their kind words today and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO) for bringing this resolution forward. I am very proud to support it and encourage all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the University of Minnesota women's hockey team, which has added new and indisputable evidence to boost Minnesota's reputation as the State of Hockey.

The Golden Gophers women's hockey team won the NCAA championship in March, beating Harvard 6-2 in the NCAA Frozen Four in Providence, RI.

Mr. Speaker, Minnesota is truly the State of Hockey, and the members of the University of Minnesota women's hockey team are true national champions.

This was the Gophers' first NCAA championship but its second national title in 5 years, as the Gophers won the ACHA title in 2000 before the NCAA started holding a tournament.

Mr. Speaker, I salute Coach Laura Halldorson, her staff and her great team—including all-tournament players Krissy Wendell, Natalie Darwitz, Jody Horak, Allie Sanchez, and Kelly Stephens—on their national championship and the impressive way the Golden Gophers handled themselves on and off the ice.

Krissy Wendell, of Brooklyn Park in the Third Congressional District, led the Gophers to a 30-4-2 record in this remarkable championship season. She had a goal and 3 assists in the championship game and 8 points during the Frozen Four. Krissy Wendell was named the Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament, and the people of our area are very proud of her and her teammates.

The greatness of the University of Minnesota's 2003-2004 Golden Gopher women's hockey team is now a part of NCAA women's athletics history.

Mr. Speaker, that greatness was recognized at the White House on May 19 when the Golden Gophers women's hockey team was honored by President Bush. As the President said that day: "I was pleased to know the University of Minnesota women's hockey team's slogan this year was 'Get it done, and meet George.' It's my pleasure to meet you."

Mr. Speaker, It is my pleasure to extend heartfelt congratulations to our national cham-

pions, the University of Minnesota women's hockey team. Congratulations on your great accomplishment, and many thanks for making the State of Hockey proud.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 630.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF RAY CHARLES

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 449) honoring the life and accomplishments of Ray Charles, recognizing his contributions to the Nation, and extending condolences to his family on his death.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 449

Whereas Ray Charles was born Ray Charles Robinson in Albany, Georgia, on September 23, 1930, the first child of Aretha and Bailly Robinson;

Whereas Ray Charles and the Robinson family battled grinding poverty, the Depression, segregation, and young Ray's loss of his sight to glaucoma when he was only 6 years old, but they never gave up hoping and working for a better life;

Whereas while attending the St. Augustine School for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine, Florida, Ray Charles learned to read Braille and type, and he developed his musical gifts by learning to compose and arrange music by ear;

Whereas Ray Charles began his career as a professional musician without financial resources, in an era of segregation, and he struggled in poverty for years before attaining success;

Whereas out of his struggle and sacrifice Ray Charles gave the world the classic songs, "I Got A Woman", "Born to Lose", "Hit the Road, Jack", "I Can't Stop Loving You", "Crying Time", "Living for the City", "Busted", "Hard Times", "Ruby", "The Right Time", "Let the Good Times Roll", "What'd I Say?", and "Hallelujah, I Love Her So";

Whereas Ray Charles demonstrated a unique ability to perform music in nearly every musical style, whether blues, jazz, gospel, country-western, or rock and roll;

Whereas Ray Charles transformed "Georgia on My Mind", an old Stuart Gorrell and Hoagy Carmichael tune from 1930, into a song which is instantly recognized throughout the world and the official song of his native State of Georgia;

Whereas with his unique style of arrangement, Ray Charles gave new life for a new century to one of America's best-known patriotic songs, "America the Beautiful";

Whereas during his most productive musical years, Ray Charles provided unfailing personal and financial support to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the struggle to end the practice of racial segregation which had divided the Nation;

Whereas Ray Charles extended his commitment to social reform beyond the United

States, publicly opposing apartheid in South Africa and anti-Semitism worldwide;

Whereas Ray Charles was one of the most influential and recognized voices of American music throughout the world, whose influence spanned generations and musical genres; and

Whereas with the death of Ray Charles on June 10, 2004, in Beverly Hills, California, the Nation has lost one of its most prolific and influential musicians: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) honors the life and accomplishments of Ray Charles Robinson;

(2) recognizes Ray Charles for his invaluable contributions to the Nation, the State of Georgia, and the American musical heritage; and

(3) extends condolences to the family of Ray Charles on the death of a remarkable man.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 449.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 449.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes the musical genius of one of Georgia's and America's greatest entertainers. It also recognizes the heroic struggle that Ray Charles Robinson began at the age of 7 to overcome the obstacle of blindness and to go on to become an international music superstar. But perhaps more importantly it also places in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for posterity his contribution to Dr. Martin Luther King's drive to end segregation, his worldwide campaign against apartheid and against anti-Semitism.

It is particularly significant to me that Ray Charles' greatest recorded public stand against segregation took place in the heart of the 12th District of Georgia. In Augusta, Georgia, Ray Charles' concert had separated black and white fans and suggested that they had to be seated in different areas of the concert hall. Ray refused. He refused to play unless folks were allowed to sit where they wanted. He was sued. He broke his contract and lost a lot of money. But he stood firm. He stood firm for his beliefs, and he stood firm in Georgia. Today we can all sit together in that same theater because of the courage and conviction of Americans like Ray Charles and Martin Luther King and my friend and colleague from Georgia, John Lewis.

For many Americans like me, it is amazing to hear Ray Charles sing "Georgia on My Mind" and "America

the Beautiful." He sings it with conviction, affection and style, that no one else ever has and no one else ever will. In spite of the offense of segregation and bigotry, he kept his love of State and of Nation while working to make both of them a better place. Ray Charles had already arrived where the rest of us needed to be.

With this resolution, we recognize not only a great musician and a great entertainer but a great Georgian and a great American.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 449 to honor the lifetime achievements of Ray Charles. I join my colleagues in mourning his recent passing, and I thank my lucky stars that I have seen him in concert many times. Ray Charles overcame childhood poverty, the loss of his eyesight at age 6, and the loss of both of his parents by the age of 15 to become a 12-time Grammy award-winning performer.

Ray Charles was a gifted pianist and saxophonist, but his greatest gift was his songs. He sang the blues, country, rock, big band swing, jazz, even classical. Many credit Ray Charles with the beginning of soul music when he combined gospel and rhythm and blues in his first recording, "I Got a Woman."

Ray Charles' version of "Georgia on My Mind" became the official song of his native State of Georgia and his performance of "America the Beautiful" gave new life and a new audience to a patriotic standard that we did not know before. But whatever Ray Charles sang in whatever style, he started from his very roots, the black American music that became the soul of his music.

It is fitting that Members from both sides of the aisle join together to honor Ray Charles, because he was not political. His music was his politics, and it embraced all listeners equally. Ray Charles' music broke down all barriers, and united his audience in appreciation. Ray Charles will be deeply missed. We are fortunate that his music will live on forever and forever.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), someone who worked diligently to recognize Ray Charles in the State House of Georgia.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, what a great day this is for this House of Representatives to set this moment in time aside to honor one of the world's most distinguished citizens. Born into searing, piercing poverty in 1930 at the start of the Great Depression; born when he could fully see, but by the time he was 7 years old he was completely blind; lost his brother at age 5, his mother at age 15, his father absent, Ray Charles, alone in the world.

But he had a genius. He had a gift deep inside of him. And his mother had the good fortune of placing him in the Florida School for the Blind, and there Ray Charles found his way to a piano. And then he learned how to play the guitar, the saxophone, the drums. What a musical genius. The hits came: "Hit the Road, Jack," "That Lucky Old Sun," "I Can't Stop Loving You." All of these great songs were manifested by the arena and the environment in which Ray Charles grew up. He got the gospel from the church. He got the blues from the honky tonks and the juke joints. He got his classical training where he could play Chopin, Strauss, and Beethoven. No musical genre did Ray Charles not capture. The beauty of it all was that Ray Charles transcended racial lines, economic lines, so that no matter where your standing in life, when you heard Ray Charles' voice, you felt it deep in the marrow of your bones.

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased and so delighted to be here to join with my other colleagues in giving this genuine hero, who survived and achieved in spite of the odds, his due recognition. So many songs he sang, "That Lucky Old Sun" and, of course, "America the Beautiful" which touched everyone; but there was no song that captured Ray Charles as much as "Georgia on My Mind."

I first met Ray Charles as a member of the House of Representatives. We invited him on the floor and he had that piano there because in 1979 when I was in the Georgia House, we passed a resolution not just honoring Ray Charles but making "Georgia on My Mind" our State song. I can see Ray Charles there now at that piano stool, swaying to and fro and saying:

Georgia, Georgia, a song of you
Comes as sweet and clean as moonlight
through the pines.
Other arms reach out to me
Other eyes smile tenderly
Still in peaceful dreams I see
The road leads back to you.
Georgia, Georgia, no peace I find
Just an old sweet song keeps Georgia on my
mind.

Just an old sweet song will forever keep Ray Charles on our minds and in our hearts, for he has left us a rich legacy of music, of culture, of art that will live on forever. It was Frank Sinatra, Old Blue Eyes himself, Chairman of the Board, who said it best about Ray Charles: "Ray Charles is the only genius in our business." No more apt words coming from Frank Sinatra himself.

Mr. Speaker, Ray Charles was not just an American treasure. Ray Charles is and will forever be a world's treasure. We thank God Almighty for blessing us mightily by sending Ray Charles our way. God bless Ray Charles, and we thank Ray Charles.

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Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 449, a bill to celebrate the life of Ray Charles.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California, my friend, for yielding me this time, the place where Ray Charles spent many wonderful and great years. I also want to thank the gentleman from the State of Georgia, my friend, for bringing this resolution forth.

This native of Georgia, son of America, citizen of the world, was born to sing. He was born to make music. Whether Gospel, blues, country, or rock, he had the rare ability to reach the depth of our souls.

After losing his sight at a very young age, Ray Charles perfected his voice, a voice that transcended race, color, and class. Through songs like "Georgia on My Mind," "America the Beautiful," "Hit the Road Jack," "What I'd Say," "Spirit in the Dark," and "I Can't Stop Loving You," he spoke to the hearts and souls of millions and became a pivotal figure in modern American and world music.

But, Mr. Speaker, Ray Charles's commitment did not just end with music. He was also committed to equality for all, by providing personal and financial support in the fight for civil rights. Ray Charles dedicated his life to uniting a divided America and bringing the world community a little closer. He was very supportive of education. He gave millions of dollars to Morehouse College in Atlanta.

For more than 60 years, Ray Charles blessed us with his music, and, Mr. Speaker, I believe we will never see his likeness again.

I thank Ray Charles. I thank him for his service. I thank him for giving his heart, his soul, his very being for the benefit of all human kind. Our world, our Nation, is a little bit better because Ray Charles passed this way with his music, with his heart, with his soul.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia and the gentlewoman from California for bringing forth this very supportive resolution. And I speak this morning to pay tribute to one of the greatest singers, songwriters, and composers of the 20th and the 21st Century, Ray Charles. I must tell the Georgians that California also claims Ray Charles as a native son.

Ray Charles, born Ray Charles Robinson on September 23, 1930, in Albany, Georgia, started his interest in music at the young age of 3 and eventually learned to read and write music in Braille, as well as play a number of instruments including the trumpet, organ, alto sax and the piano.

He scored his first big hit in 1959 with the song "What I'd Say" and went on to win 12 Grammy Awards, with nine awards between 1960 and 1966.

Of course, Ray Charles would record many hit records during the course of his career, including "Hit the Road Jack"; "I Can't Stop Loving You," "Busted"; "Born to Lose"; "Take These Chains from My Heart; and the State song of Georgia, "Georgia on My Mind."

His version of "America the Beautiful," like most of his songs, will be considered America's classic for generations to come. He won his last Grammy in 1993 for "A Song for You."

Ray Charles was a unique musician, Mr. Speaker, because of his ability to cross musical genres to create a fresh and exciting new sound. Not only did his music and words reach all types of audiences, he also commanded a strong stage presence with his personality and infectious smile warming our hearts.

He was so popular, in fact, that he became a television spokesman for a soft drink company telling viewers they picked the right choice and they picked the right one with the familiar "uh huh" refrain.

Mr. Speaker, Ray Charles was inducted into the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame in 1982 and was inducted into the Rock and Roll's Hall of Fame in its inaugural year 1986. And I was honored last year to be at the NAACP Gala in Los Angeles when they gave him the highest award, the America's Outstanding Citizen and Entertainer of the Decade Award.

I would like to extend my condolences to the family, friends and fans of Ray Charles. Oh, how beautiful America was with the genius of Ray Charles.

Ray Charles, "I Can't Stop Loving You."

I support this resolution.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Ray Charles was a musical genius, a great American, someone who stood for the rights of others. His life and his work will live forever through his music and through his legacy.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 449 honoring the life and service of Ray Charles Robinson.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 449 and commend my friend and colleague, Mr. BURNS of Georgia, for bringing this resolution, honoring the life and many accomplishments of the late Ray Charles, to the House floor for consideration today.

Ray Charles was born in Albany, Georgia on September 23, 1930. When he was only seven, he lost his eyesight to glaucoma. As a teenager, his family sent Ray to the St. Augustine School for the Deaf and Blind, where he learned to read and write music in Braille.

At the age of 15, Ray graduated from St. Augustine and went out on the road as a traveling musician. Throughout the 1950s, his young career began taking off, as evidenced by the fact that during this period of his career, he played at Carnegie Hall and the Newport Jazz Festival.

From 1960 to 1966, he won 9 of his 12 Grammy awards, as he forged a unique style, incorporating elements of jazz, blues, country and western, swing, and gospel. In addition he was a very talented pianist, who could also play the saxophone and had a voice that was distinctive in both tone and range.

A few of his major hits include "What'd I Say," "Hit the Road, Jack," "I Can't Stop Loving You," and "Georgia on My Mind," which became the state's official song as he made it one of his signature performances.

Amazingly enough, his popularity continued well into the 1990s, almost 40 years after he started. In 1993, he won his last Grammy for "A Song For You."

Sadly, Ray Charles died earlier this month, at the age of 73 on June 10, 2004 after a lengthy illness.

Ray Charles once stated "I just want to make my mark, leave something musically good behind." It is certain that he left more than something "musically good behind"—he left behind a legacy as one of the finest and greatest American musicians of the late 20th century. He will be sorely missed.

I urge all of my colleagues in the House to join me in approving this measure.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 449, which honors the life and accomplishments of Ray Charles, recognizes his contributions to the Nation, and extends condolences to his family on his death earlier this month on June 10, 2004.

Born in 1930, in Albany, Georgia, Ray Charles (nee Ray Charles Robinson) entered this world handicapped by racial segregation, poverty, and later blindness at age 6. Yet, these crippling circumstances conversely empowered the young Charles as he rose to be one of the most prominent icons in popular culture. Spanning over three decades of success, Ray Charles inspired all Americans, especially those in the African American community, to persist and aspire despite adversity.

Mr. Speaker, Ray Charles revolutionized music through his unique ability to interweave the cultural rhythms of soul music, the harmonies of jazz, and the sentiment of country-western. This exceptional fusion offered the mainstream audience an opportunity to partake in a truly moving musical experience that defied the boundaries of genre specific music. His talent and foresight were justly rewarded with three number one hits, twelve Grammys, a star on the Hollywood Boulevard Walk of Fame, induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Jazz Hall of Fame, as well as the Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame. However, the accolades are merely a superficial indicator of the far-reaching implications of Ray Charles' life.

Mr. Speaker, Ray Charles was an advocate of civil rights for all, not only through his music but also through his political actions. Mr. Charles joined Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in his fight for civil equality and saw himself "carrying the cross" for all African Americans. In 1962 he became the Honorary Chairman for the National Association for Sickle Cell Disease, and in 1975 was this organization's first, "Man of Distinction". Additionally, around this time, Ray Charles began to expand his sphere of influence as he supported anti-apartheid movements in South Africa, and participated in meetings with leaders like, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to discuss the status of Jews in Israel.

These activities show that Ray Charles enriched our lives in ways beyond his memorable songs like "Georgia On My Mind"—one of my favorites, and many recognized his efforts. In fact, in 1983 the NAACP honored him with an induction into their Hall of Fame noting his outstanding contributions to the African American community. He also participated in the historic, "We are the World" recording, which supported funding for the starving children in Africa. In 1986, Mr. Charles was doubly honored, first when he was made the Commander of Fine Arts and Letters by the French Government and second in Washington DC, when he was recognized in the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors ceremony.

Mr. Speaker, in April 1987, Ray Charles expounded upon his advocacy work, with a personal endowment of one million dollars to the Robinson Foundation for Hearing Disorders—a move that solidified his genuine philanthropic interests. In the following years these genuine interests were rewarded with honors such as: The National Medal of Arts from former President Clinton, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Black Achievement Awards committee, as well as the Helen Keller Achievement Award from the American Foundation for the Blind.

It is with bittersweet emotions that I stand in front of you today. Bitter as I mourn the loss of an American treasure, and send condolences to his family—sweet as I remember the legacy of a man who changed the lives of Americans forever.

I want to thank my esteemed colleague from the state of Georgia, Representative MAX BURNS, for his leadership in sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

Once again, I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of H. Con. Res. 449.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 449.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF BLUES MUSIC

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 13) recognizing the importance of blues music, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 13

Whereas blues music is the most influential form of music indigenous to the United States, providing the roots for contemporary music heard around the world such as rock

and roll, jazz, rhythm and blues, and country, and even influencing classical music;

Whereas the blues is a national historic treasure, which needs to be preserved and studied for the benefit of future generations;

Whereas blues music documents twentieth-century United States history, especially during the Great Depression and in the areas of race relations and pop culture;

Whereas the various forms of blues music trace the transformation of the United States from a rural, agricultural society to an urban, industrialized country;

Whereas the blues is an important facet of African-American culture in the twentieth century;

Whereas every year, people in the United States hold hundreds of blues festivals, and millions of new or reissued blues albums are released;

Whereas blues musicians from the United States, whether old or new, male or female, are recognized and revered worldwide as unique and important ambassadors of the United States and its music;

Whereas it is important to educate the young people of the United States so that they understand that the music they listen to today has its roots and traditions in the blues; and

Whereas there are many living legends of blues music in the United States who should be recognized and have their stories captured and preserved for future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) recognizes the importance of blues music with respect to many cultural developments in United States history;

(2) calls on the people of the United States to take the opportunity to study, reflect on, and celebrate the importance of the blues; and

(3) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States and interested organizations to observe the importance of the blues with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and educational programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) and the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 13.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 13, which recognizes the importance of blues music. Blues music is one of the most influential forms of music indigenous to the United States and has inspired contemporary music heard around the world including rock and roll, jazz, rhythm and blues, and country.

Blues music documents 20th Century United States history, especially during the Great Depression and in the areas of race relations and pop culture. Various forms of blues music traced

the transformation of the United States from a rural, agricultural society to an urban, industrialized country, and the blues is an important facet of the African American culture in the 20th Century.

Accordingly, blues music is considered by many a national historic treasure, which needs to be preserved and studied for the benefit of future generations. Every year people in the United States hold hundreds of blues music festivals, and millions of new or reissued blues albums are released, and blues musicians from the United States, whether old or new, male or female, are recognized and revered worldwide as unique and important ambassadors of the United States and its music.

House Concurrent Resolution 13 is simple and straightforward. It recognizes the importance of blues music with respect to many cultural developments in United States history. It calls on the people of the United States to take the opportunity to study, reflect on, and celebrate the importance of the blues and requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States and interested organizations to observe the importance of the blues with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and educational programs.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 13, which the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD) introduced to recognize the importance of blues music.

The blues is an entirely American art form. It began with slaves as a way of communicating their experiences, their faith, their pain. The earliest form of the blues is thought to be the field holler, which gave voice to the extreme suffering and oppression in the construction camps of the South. The field holler grew into the spiritual, which became the basis for the blues.

The blues began as an oral tradition and were not written down until the early 1900s when W.C. Handy began performing and publishing songs that he had heard. Handy's "Memphis Blues" and "St. Louis Blues" are credited with spreading the popularity of the blues among African American audiences.

In the 1920s, the blues became a national craze. Recordings by Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, leading blues singers, sold in the millions, and the influence of the blues can be seen both in jazz and in pop music today.

Although the blues is deeply rooted in the American black experience, listeners of all backgrounds can identify with the loneliness and the longing of the blues. The blues is truly universal.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.